Charlotte Mason's House of Education,
Scale How, Ambleside, UK, 2009

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Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
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THE "P.R." LETTER BAG.

[*The Editor is not responsible for the opinions of Correspondents.*]

DEAR MADAM,—I should like to call the attention of your readers to the training children to enjoy wild birds without molesting them. We have great delight and amusement in even our old age in this way—a retired, quiet garden, even in a town like this, being a home for many birds. We have a good tree clump, with two bowls, one for food and one for water, replenished twice a day, just before our meal times, and we see scores of birds feeding and playing about the food; also cocoanuts hanging near the windows, where we see great tits, cole tits and blue tits feeding all day long. Yesterday we were delighted to see eight—a small flock—of new birds, rather smaller than thrushes; these are *redwings*. They are here this morning still, and no doubt will stay till the holly and ivy berries, &c., are all eaten. We shall try to keep them with raisins, fat, &c. I do think it strange that ladies persist in wearing egret's plumes and whole birds, and now owls are to be worn for spring hats! I saw owl's feathers in a dear little boy's hat last year. It is really worth teaching children all this, both for profit and pleasure. Mrs. Brightwen's charming book shows how wild birds may be tamed to go in and out as they please, and without cages or any restraint. To watch thrushes and starlings bathe is wonderful fun.

Yours truly,

E. R.-F.

Darlington,
February 7th, 1899.

Wild Nature won by Kindness, Mrs. Brightwen; *In the Garden of Peace*, Helen Crofton; Swayland's *Familiar Wild Birds*. Here we identified the redwing.

DEAR EDITOR,—I should be so grateful to a P.N.E.U. mother, who is so circumstanced as to be able to secure the services of a governess, high principled and really competent (or, better still, a House of Education student), if she could see her way to help another P.N.E.U. mother, who is not so favourably circumstanced, by allowing her little nine-year-old daughter to live in her house, and share the educational advantages of a competent teacher. It would be a very great boon and kindness to a clergyman's wife, who can give excellent references.

Yours truly,

C. E. POWELL.

Address to
4, Hubert Terrace, Dover.

DEAR EDITOR,—As some of the points raised in Mrs. Miall's letter (March, 1899) may be of interest to other parents I will, with your leave, briefly touch on them. The objection to "fluidity" is, I think, based on misconception. The essence of the force of environment is that it is presented unconsciously. Instances therefore of resistance are totally

irrelevant. You cannot resist what you are unconscious of! By "fluidity" is not meant "softness" of character, but the easy receptivity of early childhood to *unconscious* impression. Further on Mrs. Miall speaks of moulding as an active process addressed to consciousness, which is exactly what it is not. Some confusion also appears between environment and habit. The study of heredity and the fact that its forces differ even in brothers would have prevented the mistake of placing the future "sot" in the same "mould" as his worthy brother. The relapsed savage is not so much an adverse argument in the "exception that proves the rule," for ten in even a hundred unrelapsed savages easily show on which side the truth lies. The pessimism of the closing sentence is, we trust, not founded upon fact; for what is true of good environment and habits is, alas, equally true of bad; and it would indeed be a deplorable thing for this country if the home influences, unconscious as well as conscious, that help to form our children's characters were as much on the side of evil as of good. Of course neither Mrs. Miall nor the writer ignore, because not here the subject of discussion, those mighty spiritual forces which, above all, are supremely powerful in all human life. I feel quite sure a further consideration of the passages criticised will shew that most of the objections raised in this letter do not apply.

Yours truly,
A. T. SCHOFIELD, M.D.

141, Westbourne Terrace,
Hyde Park *March 4th*, 1899.

DEAR EDITOR,—I appreciate so many of the papers in the *Parents' Review* that I am sorry to feel compelled to protest against the one this month on the "Advantages of Military Training." I know a great many people believe in the necessity of armies, and that we as "Friends" are in a minority as to our peace views. But I do think now, when so many are wishing to lessen armaments, it is not the time to encourage the military spirit in our young people.

Manningham Lodge,
Bradford, *March 7th*, 1899.

Believe me, yours very truly,
E. M. PRIESTMAN.

DEAR EDITOR,—We are enquiring about a school for our two girls. We are anxious they should have good teaching in English, French, Latin and German, music and painting, and a great deal of out-door life. Also we are most anxious for a school where the religious tone is good. We want our daughters to be near London and have thought of Eastbourne. If any member who has personal knowledge of a school there would be so very kind as to give me her opinion of it, I shall be most grateful. I need hardly say we prefer the P.N.E.U. method when that is to be met with. Could any member give me the names of some good easy French books for girls of 15 and 16 to read?

Yours faithfully,
(Mrs.) A. WILSON

Leytonstone, Essex,
February 18th, 1899.

DEAR EDITOR,—Would it be a useful thing to emphasize in the memories of the young learners, during this year, the millenary celebration of King Alfred, by inviting essays on his life and influence? Such essays might be classed under three standards of age and the best in each group printed in the *Parents' Review*. A good deal of light will be thrown on the subject through the various meetings, lectures, and reports by the press already beginning to be heard, and information might be collected and stored till autumn, when the long vacation will have afforded opportunity for a composition which might form a pleasant holiday task.

24, Argyll Road,
Kensington, London, W.,
March 9th, 1899

Faithfully yours,
J. B. S. THOMPSON.

DEAR EDITOR,—I have found *The Lost Plum Cake*, a delightful little story in words of four letters, extremely useful to my little ones when just beginning to read. Can anyone recommend other books, not "First Readers," for the same purpose? Also can anyone tell me of a collection of nigger melodies suitable for children's singing?

Yours truly,
A. D. R.

P.N.E.U. NOTES.

Edited by Miss FRANCES BLOGG, *Sec.*, 28, *Victoria Street, S.W.*

To whom all Hon. Local Secs. are requested to send reports of all matters of interest connected with their branches, also 30 *copies of any prospectuses or other papers they may print.*

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MANCHESTER.
NOTTINGHAM.
CROYDON.—Names may be sent *pro tem.*, P. Rands, Esq., Brighty, Bensham Manor Road.
STREATHAM.
SURBITON.
DUBLIN.
CARDIFF.
ESHER.
HUDDERSFIELD.
BRISTOL.
DORKING.—Names may be sent *pro tem.*, Mrs. Powell, Oakridge.